

IV. Dwarf-Shrubland

IV.A.1.N.a.4. HUDSONIA TOMENTOSA DWARF-SHRUBLAND ALLIANCE

Woolly Beach-heather Dwarf-shrubland Alliance

Physiognomic Class Dwarf-Shrubland (IV.)
Physiognomic Subclass Evergreen dwarf-shrubland (IV.A.)
Physiognomic Group Needle-leaved or microphyllous evergreen dwarf-shrubland (IV.A.1.)
Physiognomic Subgroup Natural/Semi-natural (IV.A.1.N.)
Formation Caespitose needle-leaved or microphyllous evergreen dwarf-shrubland (IV.A.1.N.a.)

Alliance **BACCHARIS HALIMIFOLIA - IVA FRUTESCENS TIDAL
SHRUBLAND ALLIANCE (IV.A.1.N.a.4)**

Hudsonia tomentosa - Arctostaphylos uva-ursi Dwarf-shrubland

Woolly Beach-heather - Kinikinnick Dwarf-shrubland

Northern Beach Heather Dune Shrubland

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL: 2

USFS WETLAND SYSTEM: N/A

RANGE:

Fire Island National Seashore

This association occurs on stabilized backdunes of Fire Island.

Globally

This association is restricted to coastal sand dunes from southern Maine to Long Island, New York.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING:

Fire Island National Seashore

This association occurs behind primary and secondary dunes with infrequent overwash only from heavy storm surge.

Globally

This association occurs in well-developed sand dune systems in the lee side of primary dunes or on secondary dunes. Although more stabilized than the ocean-facing primary dune, backdunes are heavily impacted by wind-deposited sand so that individual patches making up occurrences of this community change shape and move about in response to sand movement.

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES:

Fire Island National Seashore

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Shrub	<i>Hudsonia tomentosa</i>
Herbaceous	<i>Ammophila breviligulata</i>

Globally

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Shrub	<i>Hudsonia tomentosa</i> , <i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>
Herbaceous	<i>Polygonella articulata</i> , <i>Lechea maritima</i>

CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES:

Fire Island National Seashore

Hudsonia tomentosa, *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*, *Prunus maritima*, *Lechea maritima*

Globally

Hudsonia tomentosa, *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*, *Polygonella articulata*, *Lechea maritima*

USGS-NPS Vegetation Mapping Program
Fire Island National Seashore

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION:

Fire Island National Seashore

This is a maritime beach heather community dominated by *Hudsonia tomentosa*. *Prunus maritima* and *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* are also present with relatively low percent cover. The herbaceous layer is sparse with *Ammophila breviligulata* commonly occurring and *Polygonella articulata*, *Lechea maritima*, and *Solidago sempervirens* occasionally present. *Cladonia* species are usually present with low cover. Dowhan and Rozsa (1989) list *Rubus hispidus* and *Pityopsis falcata* as common associates of *Hudsonia tomentosa*.

Globally

This maritime beach heather community occurs in the North Atlantic Coast from southern Maine to Long Island, New York. *Hudsonia tomentosa* is a dominant as well as keystone species of this community, binding sand in place and forming more suitable habitat for other plants to become established. Another sand-binding associate, *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*, may codominate but may not occur in all examples, particularly at the northern edge of the range. Associated herbs include *Polygonella articulata*, *Lechea maritima*, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, *Minuartia caroliniana*, *Ionactis linariifolius*, *Solidago sempervirens*, and *Lathyrus japonicus*. Scattered individuals of *Myrica pensylvanica* often occur within this community.

COMMENTS:

Fire Island National Seashore

Globally

States/Provinces: CT:S?, MA:S?, ME:S?, NH:S?, NY:S?, RI:S?

OTHER NOTEWORTHY SPECIES:

CONSERVATION RANK: G2 (98-12-08)

DATABASE CODE: CEG006143

MAP UNITS: FIIS plots 12, 8, 18

REFERENCES:

Conard 1935
Dowhan and Rozsa 1989
Godfrey et al. 1978
McDonnell 1979
Nelson and Fink 1980
Robichaud and Buell 1973
Van Luven 1990